

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MEXICO 12751 01 OF 02 020136Z

ACTION ARA-14

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COME-00 EB-08 INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01

DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00 VO-03 INSE-00 /097 W

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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 01 OF 02 MEXICO 12751

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, SHUM, MX, US

SUBJECT: PRI ROUNDTABLE ON UNDOCUMENTED WORKERS

1. SUMMARY: JULY 29 PRI ROUNDTABLE ON UNDOCUMENTED WORKERS STRONGLY CRITICIZED U.S. FOR HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS, FLOGGED THE DEAD HORSE OF AMNESTY AND MASSIVE DEPORTATION, AND CALLED FOR SOLUTIONS THAT APPEAR TO INVOLVE NEW BRACERO AGREEMENTS. END SUMMARY

2. REVOLUTIONARY INSTITUTIONAL PARTY (PRI) IN JULY 29 ROUNDTABLE ADDRESSED UNDOCUMENTED WORKERS PROBLEM, CONDEMNING U.S. FOR HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS OF MEXICAN WORKERS ILLEGALLY IN U.S., CHARGING THEIR SITUATION WAS "TIME BOMB" THAT COULD EXPLODE AT ANY TIME, AND LABELING PROBLEM AS FAST BECOMING MOST CONFLICTIVE ONE IN U.S.-MEXICAN RELATIONS. ROUNDTABLE ATTENDED BY PRI PRESIDENT (NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HEAD) CARLOS SANORES PEREZ AND ORGANIZED BY DIRECTOR OF JURIDICAL AFFAIRS FELICIANO CALZADA PADRON, WHO WE ARE TOLD VIEWED MIGRATION AS A

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PAGE 02 MEXICO 12751 01 OF 02 020136Z

POLITICAL ISSUE THAT PARTY HAD HERETOFORE NOT FORMALLY ADDRESSED. PRINCIPAL SPEAKERS WERE SENATOR HORACIO LABASTIDA, CHAIRMAN MEXICAN SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE, (PROMINENT IN MEXICAN-U.S. INTERPARLIAMENTARY MEETINGS FOR MANY YEARS); DR. JORGE BUSTAMANTE, SPECIALIST IN MIGRATION OF EL COLEGIO DE MEXICO; AND LUIS DANTON RODRIGUEZ, DIRECTOR OF PRI THINK-TANK, INSTITUTE OF POLI-

TICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL STUDIES (IEPES).

3. SALIENT POINTS OF INTERVENTIONS: LABASTIDA EMPHASIZED HUMAN RIGHTS ASPECTS, CHARGING U.S. ACTION TOWARD MEXICAN WORKERS WAS "ATTITUDE OF NOMADS, NOT OF CIVILIZED NATIONS" AND STATING U.S. CONDUCT VIOLATED NOT ONLY MEXICAN CONSTITUTION BUT THIRTEENTH AMENDMENT U.S. CONSTITUTION REGARDING FORCED LABOR AND SLAVERY.

4. BUSTAMANTE EXCORIATED "AMNESTY" FOR WORKERS WITH SEVEN YEARS' RESIDENCE IN U.S., STATING MEXICO COULD NOT ACCEPT ALLEGATION OF CRIMINALITY FOR THOSE EXERCISING RIGHT TO WORK AND ADDING THAT, SINCE U.S. WAS AWARE 97 PERCENT OF WORKERS REMAINED IN U.S. NO MORE THAN 16 MONTHS, "AMNESTY" WAS "A POLITICAL TRICK" OF U.S. ADMINISTRATION. HE IMPLIED BAD FAITH ON U.S. PART IN CLAIMING U.S. OFFERED AMNESTY ON ONE HAND WHILE ON OTHER CONGRESS UNCONDITIONALLY SUPPORTED INCREASE IN SIZE OF BORDER PATROL AND LEGISLATED SANCTIONS AGAINST U.S. EMPLOYERS OF ILLEGALS. HE AND OTHERS STATED U.S. PRESS DELIBERATELY EXAGGERATED NUMBER OF WORKERS IN U.S., AND BLAMED AFL-CIO FOR DELIBERATE CAMPAIGN AGAINST MEXICAN WORKERS.

5. DANTON RODRIGUEZ SAID THERE WAS NO PROOF MEXICAN WORKERS DEPRIVED U.S. LABOR OF JOBS IT WAS WILLING TO PERFORM.

6. CALZADA EMPHASIZED POSITION (FREQUENTLY VOICED BY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 MEXICO 12751 01 OF 02 020136Z

PRESIDENT LOPEZ PORTILLO) THAT WORKERS WERE NOT CRIMINALS BUT HONEST MEN, MOSTLY WITH LARGE FAMILIES, PURSUING THEIR HUMAN RIGHT TO WORK. REPEATING CHARGE THAT NUMBER OF WORKERS WAS EXAGGERATED IN U.S., HE SAID U.S. CONGRESS SUPPORTED EFFORTS OF AMERICAN BUSINESS TO GET CHEAP LABOR THAT BENEFITTED AMERICAN ENTERPRISES AND STRESSED MEXICAN WORKERS WERE WITHOUT ANY LEGAL PROTECTION AND WERE CONSTANTLY HARASSED. HE AND OTHERS ACKNOWLEDGED, ALTHOUGH IN PASSING, THAT ROOT OF PROBLEM WAS IN RURAL UNDERDEVELOPMENT IN MEXICO AND IN LACK OF JOBS IN MEXICAN AGRICULTURE.

7. BUSTAMANTE AS WELL AS OTHERS CLAIMED FOUR MILLION WORKERS FACED "MASSIVE DEPORTATION", WITH POSSIBILITY ONE MILLION WOULD BE DEPORTED "IN PRESENT YEAR." DEPORTATION WOULD CREATE GREAT SOCIAL PROBLEMS AND UNREST NOT ONLY IN BORDER AREA BUT IN WHOLE COUNTRY.

8. CONCLUSIONS OF ROUNDTABLE WERE THAT SOLUTIONS SATISFACTORY TO BOTH MEXICO AND U.S. MUST BE ADVANCED. THEY WOULD INCLUDE: REGULARIZING SITUATION OF NON-DOCUMENTED WORKERS; PROMOTING INTERNAL EMPLOYMENT POLICY THAT WOULD REDUCE

PRESSURE FOR EMIGRATION; AND WORKING FOR TREATY OR AGREEMENT THAT WOULD REGULATE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH MEXICANS COULD WORK IN U.S.

9. OPPOSITION PARTIES CAN BE EXPECTED TO JUMP ON BANDWAGON THAT PRI HAS STARTED ROLLING. SENATOR JORGE CRUICKSHANK, LEADER OF POPULAR SOCIALIST PARTY (PPS), TOLD PRESS OVER WEEKEND THAT U.S. STAND ON UNDOCUMENTED WORKERS IS BEING USED TO WEAKEN POSITION MEXICO WOULD OTHERWISE TAKE ON EXPORTS OF ITS OIL AND GAS TO U.S., AND A UNAM EXPERT ON LAND TENURE HAS POINTED OUT THAT RETURNING WORKERS WOULD ASK TO SHARE IN AVAILABLE LAND DISTRIBUTION MEASURES,

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PAGE 01 MEXICO 12751 02 OF 02 020140Z
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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 02 OF 02 MEXICO 12751

THEREBY COMPLICATING THE ISSUE FURTHER.

10. EMBASSY COMMENTS: PRI'S EMPHASIS WAS CLEARLY ON WORKERS PROBLEM AS U.S. VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS OF MEXICANS, AND LANGUAGE WAS PROBABLY STRONGEST WE HAVE NOTED OVER LAST YEAR. SPEAKERS WERE HIGHLY SELECTIVE IN ASPECTS OF PROPOSED U.S. PROGRAM THAT THEY MENTIONED. THEY DID NOT REFER TO ELEMENT OF NON-DEPORTABLE STATUS FOR FIVE YEARS OF MEXICAN WORKERS IN U.S. PRIOR TO JANUARY 1, 1977 AND EMPHASIZED "AMNESTY", TERM WHICH U.S. NO LONGER EMPLOYS. WHILE SOME SPEAKERS MAY RPT MAY NOT HAVE BEEN AWARE THAT NON-DEPORTABLE STATUS CONCEPT WAS PART OF PACKAGE, AND MAY HAVE TAKEN AS GOSPEL EXCELSIOR REPORT THAT NON-DEPORTABLE ALIEN PROVISION HAD BEEN ABANDONED, THEY WERE INTENT ON PRESENTING A WORST-CASE PICTURE. LIKEWISE, SPEAKERS, INCLUDING BUSTAMANTE, PLAYED UP FEARS OF

"MASSIVE DEPORTATION", WHICH THEY ERRONEOUSLY DESCRIBED AS HAVING BEEN ANNOUNCED BY U.S. BUSTAMANTE SAID LARGE-SCALE DEPORTATIONS WAS "A POLITICAL APPROACH" BY U.S., TO WHICH MEXICO SHOULD REPLY WITH A POLITICAL APPROACH OF ITS OWN.

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PAGE 02 MEXICO 12751 02 OF 02 020140Z

11. PRI WAS CRITICAL OF ABROGATION OF PREVIOUS BRACERO PROGRAMS, AND IN ITS CALL FOR TREATIES OR AGREEMENTS TO REGULATE WORK CONDITIONS (SEE PARA 8) SEEMED TO BE ADVOCATING NEW BRACERO PROGRAMS. SUCH WAS UNDERSTANDING OF EL SOL AND EXCELSIOR EDITORIALS JULY 30.

12. GIVEN MEXICO'S CONTROLLING ONE-PARTY SYSTEM, IT MUST BE ASSUMED THAT GOM GAVE ADVANCE APPROVAL TO PRI ROUNDTABLE AND KNEW WHAT ARGUMENTS IT WOULD SET FORTH. EXTENT TO WHICH THE GOM WAS PERMITTING ITS POLITICAL ARM TO LET OFF STEAM VERSUS THE EXTENT TO WHICH IT IS ATTEMPTING TO INFLUENCE THE CONTENT OF THE U.S. EXECUTIVE BRANCH PROGRAM IS HARDER TO EVALUATE THIS SOON. IT IS THE PATENT SELECTIVITY OF THE MEXICAN PRESENTATION OF THE SUBJECT THAT IS MOST TROUBLING. END EMBASSY COMMENTS. LUCEY

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